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ABSTRACT

Research in law-related education (LRE) and related fields is reviewed in this report. For the past two decades, researchers consistently have reported that law-related curricula and instruction make a positive impact on youth when compared to traditional approaches to teaching and learning law, civics, and government. The overall conclusion is that LRE programs have a positive effect on student knowledge about law and legal processes, and individual rights and responsibilities. In addition, there is evidence that LRE programs have a positive influence on student attitudes and behavior. The most positive changes in student behavior often are associated with LRE programs where the following elements are present: instruction is of high quality and promotes higher order thinking; students are actively involved in the instructional process; teachers thoughtfully mediate the curriculum through wise selection of materials and outside resource persons; administrators actively support the program; and instructors have a network of professional peer support. This review incorporates an analysis of the major databases that yielded 9 technical reports, 6 scholarly papers, and 25 dissertations directly linked to law-related education. In addition, 13 journal articles and 6 book chapters were included in the review. (BT)

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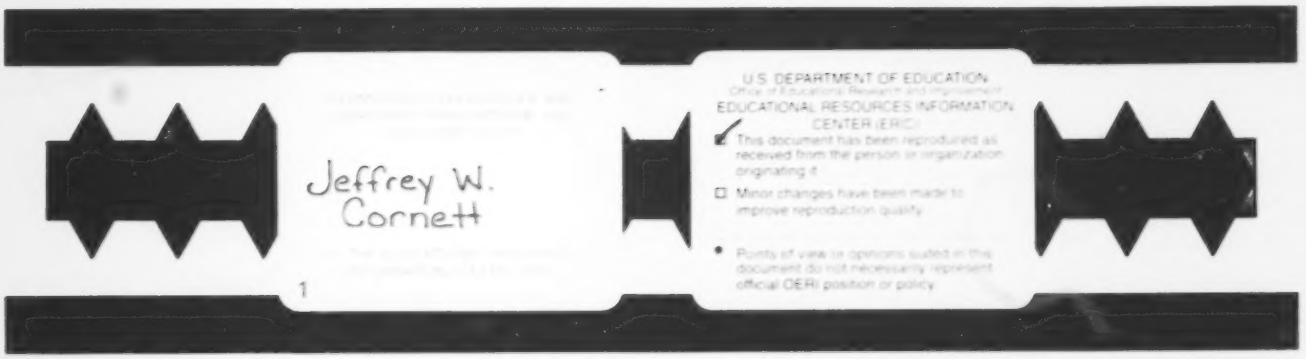
Understanding the value of law related and civic education for youth: A review of the literature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Executive Summary

This report is a review of the research in law-related education and related fields.[1]

For the past two decades, researchers have consistently reported that law-related curricula and instruction make a positive impact on youth when compared with traditional approaches to teaching and learning law, civics, and government. The overall conclusion is that LRE programs have a positive effect on student knowledge about law and legal processes, and about individual rights and responsiblities.

In addition, there is evidence that LRE programs have a positive influence on student attitudes and behavior. Research studies indicate that several LRE programs have improved student attitudes toward the justice system and toward authority. In addition, research links have been made between effective LRE programs and youth who exhibit more law abiding behavior and commit fewer delinquent acts.

The most positive changes in student behavior are often associated with LRE programs where the following elements are present: instruction is of high quality and promotes higher order thinking; students are actively involved in the instructional process; teachers thoughtfully mediate the curriculum through wise selection of materials and outside resource persons; administrators actively support the program; and instructors have a network of professional peer support.

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[1]While this review was not exhaustive of all literature sources, it did incorporate an analysis of the major data bases which yielded nine technical reports, six scholarly papers, and twenty five dissertations directly linked to law-related education. In addition, journal articles and book chapters were included in the review.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the research in law-related education and related fields which demonstrates the value of LRE, civic education, and related curricular innovations such as service learning and Teen Court. The reviewer examined data bases such as Dissertation Abstracts International and ERIC, and analyzed materials which were thought to be most relevant from those forwarded by James Giese, Executive Director of the Social Science Education Consortium, Inc., and Ronald Banazak, Director, Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship of the American Bar Association . These materials included a variety of types of published and non-published scholarship including journal articles, book chapters, abstracts, and evaluation reports.[1]

Several sources served as guides for the categorization of the literature. Those publications designated as reviews are described in detail below (Skeel, 1991; Naylor, 1994; Patrick and Hoge, 1991; Giese, 1997). In addition, Arbetman's (1991) summary of the findings from the five national LRE organizations and two evaluation organizations that were funded from 1981 through 1983 by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to determine the impact of LRE on juvenile delinquency prevention, was helpful in the conceptualization of this report. He summarizes the results of the evaluations as follows:

> (a) LRE, in addition to its impact on students' knowledge gain, has the potential to affect student behavior; (b) some of the classes studied showed improved student behavior, some showed no change in behavior, and a few showed deteriorating behavior; (c) changes in behavior were not directly related to knowledge gain but rather were associated with the presence of series of six factors. (p. 9)

Arbetman lists the six characteristics:

> *1. Adequate Preparation and Use of Outside Resource Persons; 2. Quality and Quantity of Instruction; 3. Judicious Selection and Presentation of Illustrative Material and Management of Controversy; 4. Active Participation and Student Interaction; 5. Involvement of Building Administrators; 6. Professional Peer Support.* (p. 10)

These six characteristics are reinforced by many of the research studies reviewed below.[2]

Prior Reviews of the LRE-Related Research Literature

Previous reviews of the literature were helpful in the construction of this report. The author examined the following sources to identify references and to glean ideas from the previous reviewers as to the significance of the studies which were reviewed and the resultant categories for analysis and discussion. The authors of these reviews were as follows: Skeel, 1991; Naylor, 1994; Patrick and Hoge, 1991; and Giese, 1997.

Law-Related Education Research: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, 1991

Skeel (1991) reviewed the LRE literature to examine the scholarship related to research on LRE. She found that, while there were over 700 entries in the ERIC data base, most of the abstracts were not research, but provided *reasons for teaching law-related education, describe numerous curriculum materials, and discuss teaching strategies that should be used in presenting law-related education to students at all levels.* (p. 63)

Skeel's search of Dissertation Abstracts and prior dissertation reviews (Gross, 1972; McPhie, 1964; and Hepburn and Dahler, 1983, all cited in Skeel), revealed four dissertations from 1977-1982, and five dissertations from 1982 to 1991. Skeel references journal articles and research reports as well.

Skeel utilizes the following categories as major headings in her discussion of the literature: *Introduction: The Status of Research; Infusing Law Concepts into the Regular Curriculum*; *Teaching Strategies*; *Effect on Students*; *Summary of Findings*; *Implications for the Preparation of Preservice Teachers.*

Skeel concludes that,

> *Although the research is limited, it appears that we can make some recommendations for preservice teacher preparation programs. If law-related education is to be effectively implemented in classrooms, teachers need to be (a) convinced that law-related education has a positive impact on students (Van Decar 1984; Markowitz 1986; Johnson and Hunter 1987; and Jacobson and Palonsky 1981), (b) adequately prepared to use teaching strategies that have proved effective in presenting law-related education (Solliday 1983; Byerly 1980; and Tinkler 1981), (c) familiar with available law-related education materials (Solliday 1983; Byerly 1980), and (d) prepared to infuse law-related education into the regular social studies curriculum (Pickle 1983).* (p. 66)

Research and Law-Related Education: Perceptions, Perspectives and Possibilities, 1994

Naylor (1994) provides a status report on LRE and asserts that, "Despite LRE's growth and impact, information about it has been remarkably absent from the professional literature" (p.1). He lists five categories of questions which synthesize what he feels researchers are interested in knowing. These are as follows; *1) What is the nature and status of LRE? ... 2) What impact does LRE have on the lives of students? ... 3) What is needed to teach LRE effectively?... 4) How should teachers be prepared to teach LRE? ...* and, *5) What is required to get--and keep--LRE in school programs? ...* (p. 2). These questions and the sub-questions Naylor provides should be helpful to those generating new research or attempting to synthesize the existing research base.

Teaching Government, Civics, and Law, 1991

Patrick and Hoge (1991) reviewed scholarship related to government, civics, and law, and produced "*a synthesis of findings on (a) curriculum patterns, (b) contents of the curriculum as indicated by widely used textbooks, (c) patterns of student learning, and (d) effects of schools on what students learn*" (p. 427).[3] Major headings for their chapter include the following: *Curriculum Patterns in Government, Civics, and Law; Textbook Content in Government, Civics, and Law; Civic Learning: Knowledge, Attitudes and Values, Skills; Concluding Comments About Problems and Needs.* They assert that "Current curriculum

patterns indicate a secure place for government, civics, and law in elementary and secondary schools" (p. 428).

These authors state that analysis of textbooks in government, civics, and law, "are the best indicators of what is taught in the typical classroom" (p. 429). They suggest that,

> *The textbooks at all levels of schooling tend to be supportive of the status quo. Critical or alternative views of government and civic traditions in the United States tend to be missing from elementary textbooks and downplayed in secondary materials. Bland, matter-of-fact presentations of content and the absence of controversy are hallmarks of treatments of government, civics, and law in schoolbooks (Carroll et al., 1987; Larkins et al., 1987).* (p. 429)

Patrick and Hoge indicate that "Most high school students and adults... lack detailed knowledge and understanding of institutions, principles, and processes of government, law, and politics in the United States" (p. 431). However, they point to the potential limitations of this research finding and also the testing process in the following:

> *A major objective in teaching government, civics, and law in schools has been to transmit knowledge. However, assessments of the knowledge of older adolescents and adults suggest only modest success in this important dimension of education in schools. However, critics argue that the NAEP-type tests of knowledge do not provide an accurate picture of what students really know. Respondents are required to answer multiple-choice questions that emphasize recall of discrete information and do not measure higher-level learning of a subject.* (p. 431)

Patrick and Hoge also submit that the literature suggests that,

> *The classroom climate established by the teacher is one key to the development of civic attitudes through formal instruction. Another key is regular and systematic teaching about issues. Teachers who emphasize analysis and appraisal of controversial public issues in an "open" classroom environment, where students feel free and secure in their expression of ideas and information, are likely to enhance learning of democratic attitudes, such as political interest, sense of political efficacy, political trust, and respect for the rights of other persons (Ehman, 1980; Goldenson, 1978; Leming, 1985; Torney et al., 1975).* (p. 433)

The importance of classroom and school climate is reinforced by Hepburn (1991).

Patrick and Hoge conclude that,

> *Curriculum patterns and trends in elementary and secondary schools indicate that government, civics, and law will continue to be mainstays of formal education in the social studies. The teaching and learning of these interrelated subjects--keystones in school programs to educate students for effective citizenship in our constitutional democracy--can be enhanced by more and better research designed to provide dependable findings and recommendations to practitioners.* (p. 434)

Patrick and Hoge emphasize a dispute in the literature between researchers who claim that law-related education programs deter juvenile delinquency (i.e., Hunter and Turner, 1981), and a critic of this research (Shaver, 1984). This dispute is noteworthy, since Patrick and Hoge state that "Shaver (1984) disputed this claim, because of serious flaws in the methodology of the study from which it was made, such as the (a) absence of a sound experimental design, (b) reliance on self-report data, and (c) use of correlational data to make cause-effect statements" (p. 433). This summary is important since many in the field have access to this synthesis, but not the original papers that were unpublished.

Because of the comprehensive nature of the evaluation studies and the power of the critique, it is important in this review of LRE literature to discuss this difference between contributors to the LRE Evaluation Project (i.e., Hunter and Turner, (1981), Turner, (1984), and Johnson, (1984)) and their critic, Shaver (1984), since others have pointed to this exchange and as a result, have focused on a dispute between scholars, rather than the findings of the research. For example, Naylor (1994) states that "Concerns about research design, methodology, and conclusions, especially the reliance on student responses to attitudinal and self-reported delinquency measures, have been raised both within the field and within the research community" (p. 1). This statement is problematic since Naylor does not provide any citations to support this very powerful statement. Viewed in conjunction with the failure of Patrick and Hoge (1991) to include the Johnson (1984b) addendum which addresses Shaver's

critique, it appears that the field should be cautioned about failure to include multiple perspectives when available.[4] A brief discussion of the alternative perspectives on the LRE Evaluation Project is provided below.

Johnson (1984a) illustrates his concern for rigorous methods in the evaluation of the effects of LRE on students. He states,

> *With the aim of adding to the prospects for giving credible and useful advice (formative evaluation) and as a means of addressing threats to the validity of the findings, evaluators combined student impact testing with interviews, questionnaires, and direct observations involving a broad range of participants. Members of the evaluation team have interviewed teachers, school administrators, community resource people, and others who have participated in the classroom. They have observed in experimental and comparison classrooms, in training sessions, and in district seminars. Measures have included high inference scales and low inference observation formats.* (pp. 1-2)

Shaver (1984) provides a very comprehensive critique of the Law-related Education Evaluation Project . He stresses that "The critique is not meant to be all inclusive. Rather, the intent is to indicate some major concerns in regard to the report and the conclusions drawn prematurely, I believe, from it" (p. 2) He also suggests that, "Clearly, then, it would be unrealistic to expect perfectly valid research in an effort to evaluate law-related education" (p. 1). Shaver proceeds to indicate his concerns with the first year report which include the emphasis on "juvenile delinquency as its major dependent variable" (p. 2); the use of student self-reports of behavior (p.2); cause and effect claims (p. 3); "heavy reliance on tests of statistical significance" (p. 5); the lack of adequate information to support recommendations (pp. 7-9). Similar concerns about method, design, data analysis, and findings are raised about the second year report.

Johnson (1984b) replies to this critique in his addendum to his paper (1984a). This response addresses issues of selectivity and self-reports. He concludes,

> *Fianlly, (sic) this writer shares the concern (Shaver, . 1) that headlines and brief*

> *summary accounts of research may mislead. In view of all of the foregoing, however, the capacity of the cited headlines to mislead is trivial compared to the misleading information conveyed by the critique just examined.* (p. 7)

This exchange is ironic in that, while Shaver warns that all studies are flawed, the strength of his critique appears to overshadow this warning. As a result, it appears that subsequent researchers (e.g., Naylor, 1994; Patrick and Hoge, 1991) may have focused on the methodological problems and not the strength of the research by the evaluation project. [5]

Two Decades Of Research On Law-Related Education, 1997

Giese (1997) used secondary research (Skeel, 1991; NLREEP, 1983), and surveys of networks and organizations to generate a chronological review of the impact of LRE on students. While there are 54 references cited in the bibliography, only 23 of those are included in the report of effects of LRE on students. Giese asserts that,

> ...whatever the research design and regardless of grade level, virtually all the research reported here shows that LRE has a positive impact on student knowledge. Those studies that also investigate changes in attitudes and behavior also report positive changes in these two areas when experimental (LRE) students are compared to control groups of students not exposed to LRE . (p. 9)

He also suggests that ,

> *...research in a number of areas in education generally and in social studies education specifically lends implicit support and sometimes direct support for many of the instructional practices and content (e.g., controversial, real world issues) advocated by law-related educators. Such research includes political socialization, classroom climate, higher order thinking, controversial issues, cooperative learning and other examples of active learning (aligned with high academic standards), discussion versus recitation, student motivation, teacher expectations of students, and how students actively construct knowledge, among others. (p. 10)*

While a number of these related areas of research identified by Giese were included in this

review, there was no attempt to conduct an exhaustive review of all literature associated with these topics.

The current review extended the literature reviews conducted by Skeel and Giese. A search of Dissertation Abstracts on disc revealed the following number of dissertations found on each of the four CD-Roms in the data base using the search words "law related education":

1. January 1861 to December 1981, 5 dissertations;
2. January 1982 to December 1987, 9 dissertations;
3. January 1988 to December 1992, 2 dissertations;
4. January 1993 to December 1996, 1 dissertation.

The total number of dissertations on law related education from 1861 to 1996 contained in this data base is 17.[6] Each of these dissertations is cited in this report.[7]

The number of civic education dissertations is greater in each of the time frames. Using the search words "civic education," the following results were obtained:

1. January 1861 to December 1981, 22 dissertations;
2. January 1982 to December 1987, 14 dissertations;
3. January 1988 to December 1992, 13 dissertations;
4. January 1993 to December 1996, 15 dissertations.

The total number of dissertations on civic education from 1861 to 1996 contained in this data base is 64.[8]

Individual Studies of Law-Related Education

The discussion of the literature which follows is organized according to the following topics: LRE curriculum, Effect on Students, Teaching Strategies, Teacher Perceptions About

LRE, Teacher Thinking and Beliefs About LRE, Administrators and LRE Programs, Inservice of Teachers, Teen Court, and Institutionalization . While many of the studies have elements that might make their inclusion in multiple sections appropriate, the author has chosen to place them under the header which seems most emphasized in the report. The studies are arranged chronologically as well.

LRE Curriculum

Joseph (1980) developed a curriculum for forty sixth graders which emphasized the concepts of liberty, justice, and equality. Researcher developed pre and post tests provided significant results which led the researcher to conclude that sixth graders can learn these concepts and that the key components of the curriculum included mock trials, simulations, case-study and role-playing.

Kirk (1982) used a modified Delphi technique to move the 320 survey respondents toward consensus as to preferred content and procedural options in local law related educational programs. The respondents represented eight special interest groups in the educational and legal system communities. Content options preferred by those surveyed included both current social studies curricula and practical law-related issues. Procedural options preferred included use of resource persons, audio visual curricula that were local, and LRE inservice training. In addition, respondents indicated that LRE content should be introduced prior to high school.

Carter (1983) reports the results of a literature review, state inquiry, and visitation of programs, centered on an educational reintegration preparation model. This model was designed to ease incarcerated juvenile offenders' reintegration into the community. Law related education is a part of what the researcher labels as essential educational components of the

model. Other areas deemed essential were prevocational and vocational education, survival education, and social development education.

Pickle (1983) investigated the ability of four teachers to infuse law related education curriculum into secondary economics and American history courses. The clarity and utility of the law related lesson plans were determined through clinical supervision of instruction and pretest and posttest of student performance. The results of the study indicate that law concepts may be effectively infused in these courses.

Picard (1984) evaluated the Justice Education Teaching Strategies (JETS) to determine if the program would increase knowledge and improve attitudes during the six week program. The research was conducted with six classes, two each at grades four, five, and six. The researcher provided experimental group teachers with a two hour inservice and assistance during the implementation phase. The experimental group received JETS instruction, exposure to outside resource speakers, LRE films, and a field trip to a courthouse. The control group received the traditional social studies curriculum. Through pretest and posttest measures of attitude and knowledge, it was determined that the experimental group had significantly increased knowledge and positively changed attitudes toward the justice system.

Two papers related to the LRE Evaluation Project discussed above are cited below because of their clear impact on the field (e.g., see Arbetman, 1991). Turner (1984) points to some of the findings of the evaluation, and their limits in the following:

> *In sum, it is only when certain features--(1) use of outside resourse (sic) persons in the classroom, (2) use of teaching strategies that foster true interaction and joint work among students, (3) judicious selection and balance of illustrative cases, (4) provision of sufficient quantity of instruction, (5) involvement of building administrators, and (6) availability and use by teachers of professional peer support--are incorporated into law-related education programs that we find positive, improvements in behavior. (p. 3)*

Johnson (1984a) summarizes the results of the research in the following:

> *Neither the suggestive evidence from other sites nor the favorable outcomes at Bill Reed Junior High School imply that adopting an LRE textbook and offering a course by that name will automatically produce desirable effects. The LRE classes studied nationally in 1981 and 1982 varied widely in their levels of success; a few classes even appeared to* worsen *student attitudes and* increase *the frequency of delinquent behavior. Our observation of training and classrooms, logs submitted by teachers, and discussions with the principal indicate that the features associated with effectiveness in reducing delinquency were present to an extraordinarily high degree at Reed. Our study of LRE classes at other schools suggests strongly that* the major reason LRE was so effective at Bill Reed Junior High School was that these features were a prominent part of the program. *Distinguishing this program from many less successful ones were the extensive use of outside resource persons, the activities used to engage students, the choice and way of presenting illustrative material, and strong administrative support. Based on the evidence from the national study, increases in student knowledge probably would have occurred in the absence of other features; improvements in behavior and attitudes probably would not.* (p. 10, emphasis in original)

This summary points both to the limits of the study and uses qualifying language (e.g., probably).

Conway (1991) compared 1149 high school students' political attitudes, attentiveness, knowledge, and behavior products. Students were exposed to either traditional civics coursework, or traditional coursework supplemented with the Close up Foundation's Washington Focus Week program. Survey data and sub-sample interviews were analyzed and revealed that those students who took part in the Focus Week displayed slightly higher measures of efficacy, lower trust, and were more likely to be involved in their own school culture and some political activities. The researcher concludes that the students retained a legalistic definition of citizenship.

Avery, Bird, Johnstone, Sullivan, and Thalhammer (1992) developed a curriculum entitled *Tolerance for Diversity of Beliefs* which was implemented in civics classrooms in three secondary schools. The research team collected data on the dependent variable of political tolerance[9] and the independent variables of support for democratic norms, preceived threat,

authoritarianism, knowledge of the curriculum, attitude toward the curriculum, and the demographic variables of race, gender, and grades in school. 274 students were exposed to the researcher-designed curriculum, and 168 students studied the regular civics curriculum. The four teachers in the study were volunteers and the impact of their mediation of the curriculum was not measured. The researchers identified a statistically significant increase in political tolerance in those exposed to the researcher-designed curriculum. They concluded that political tolerance can be taught and that their curriculum promotes a greater awareness of individual rights.

The Social Studies Development Center (1993) evaluated the instructional effects of the *We the People... With Liberty and Justice for All* curriculum materials by comparing students who were exposed to the Bill of Rights in government and civics classes via traditional textbooks with those who experienced the *With Liberty and Justice for All* curriculum. There were 185 students in the participation group and 308 students in the comparison (traditional) group. The results of student test performance indicated that the *We the People...* program had a strong, positive effect on student knowledge associated with the Bill of Rights.

Brody (1994) also examined political tolerance as a construct and investigated the impact of civics curricular in general, and *We the People...* on students' political attitudes. He surveyed 1,351 high school students across the United States, and found: students in civics government and American history courses had more political tolerance than average Americans; those students who experienced all or part of the *We the People...* curriculum were more tolerant than those in traditional civics, government, and American history courses; *We the People...* promotes increased tolerance because it enhances self-confidence and students perceive fewer limits on their political freedom; those students who were exposed *We the People...* and took part in simulated congressional hearing competitions had the highest levels of tolerance.

Buzzell (1994) evaluated the impact of the *Teens, Crime & the Community* curriculum on the attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors of eleven high risk students who frequently were adjudicated. Cognitive maps were developed from student interview data before and after the implementation of the curriculum. Students were exposed to content lessons such as victims of crime, and criminal and juvenile justice systems (10 lesson topics in all), a community project, and resource persons. The author states that the evaluation indicates that the TCC program has some utility with this population.

The Center for Action Research (1994) evaluated Project Prince, an LRE program designed to reduce the frequency of delinquent acts by youths, and to increase attitudinal and social antecedents linked to law-abiding behavior. Students completed a pretest and posttest questionnaire and a follow-up questionnaire 16 months following course completion. The researchers conclude that students in grades eight and nine, who received LRE instruction through teachers who received Project Prince training, gain greater knowledge of law and legal processes compared to students exposed to traditional social studies practice. LRE students also display more favorable attitudes toward authority, law-abiding behavior, and commit fewer delinquent acts.

Butler (1995) investigated the difference in student attitudes about willingness to participate in society, efficacy, and trust of the governmental system and its officials. 176 students from three schools took part in the study. Students were either enrolled in traditional classrooms or in those which used *We the People...* materials, which included critical thinking and small group activities, and a performance assessment model. The researcher used a survey instrument as well as qualitative data from site visitations to determine that those exposed to the *We the People...* curriculum were ranked higher in all three attitudinal measures.

Gastil (1995) examined deliberative civic education and presents the findings of survey

data obtained from National Issues Forums participants. The researcher concludes that NIF is effective in changing some beliefs and behaviors, but cautions that effect sizes are small and the manner in which the forums are conducted is an important element.

Effect on students [10]

Jacobson (1979) developed an attitude-behavior scale for law education and his questionnaire which was administered to 304 students grades five and six, 112 students grade eight, and 53 juvenile offenders in a state training school. Among the findings, he reports that elementary students had more positive law-related attitudes, followed by junior high students, who were followed in rank by juvenile offenders.

Jacobson and Palonsky (1981) investigated the impact of an LRE program on attitudes of 106 elementary school students toward the law. The results indicate that LRE influences the attitudes and knowledge (when viewed separately) of the elementary students exposed to LRE.

Van Decar (1984) conducted a 14-question interview with 20 students, grades 6, 9, and combination 11-12, who had been provided law related education and compared them with 120 students who had been provided the regular social studies curriculum. She found that those exposed to the law related curriculum were more likely to apply standards of responsible conduct to authority figures. LRE students had more ideas about how citizens participate and more understanding of their own roles in the system. The researcher suggests that LRE exposure should begin prior to grades 11-12.

Otoyo (1985) interviewed sixty juvenile offenders to assess their knowledge of the juvenile justice system. The instrument was developed from the LRE literature on what juveniles should know and from input from a panel of experts. Five categories of appropriate knowledge emerged: source of laws, definitions, application of laws, conditions of probation and

school attendance, and the purpose of the Juvenile Court. The researcher found that the juvenile offenders did not demonstrate full knowledge in any of the categories, and had the least knowledge in the category of source of laws. Researcher recommendations include development and revision, where appropriate, of LRE curricula, with initiation of LRE at the elementary level.

Markowitz (1986) utilized researcher developed instruments, classroom observations, and teacher interviews to determine the impact of LRE on student social attitudes and behavior patterns. 195 students in grades 2, 3, and 4 were randomly placed in control and experimental groups. The experimental groups had teachers who were trained in LRE during a four day institute. While the researcher reported statistically insignificant results on some measures, there were significant results in the following: second graders' attitudes toward authority and justice; fourth graders' improvement of behavior and minimal knowledge change; and the tendency of progressive teachers to improve attitudes while traditional teachers developed greater knowledge gains. Overall, there was no correlation between increased knowledge and improved attitudes and behavior. It appears then, that this was due in part to grade level and teacher effect.

Fox, Minor, and Pelkey (1994) examined the link between LRE diversion and the social and self perceptions of 61 juvenile offenders in Kentucky. Juvenile offenders who were in custody at five sites were provided twelve LRE lessons. Using a quasi-experimental, pretest to posttest, between-groups design the researchers found that LRE may be useful in the context of juvenile diversion. Of the 57 LRE participants who had at minimum one police contact prior to LRE training, only six were referred back to Court Designated Workers staff within the one year period following the training.

Wright, Buzzell, Wright, and Gay (1994) evaluated the effectiveness of a youthful offenders intervention program in Iowa. The subjects were 16 and 17 year old juveniles

adjudicated as adults and 18 and 19 year olds. The program included elements of LRE, as well as six other interventions. The researchers reported changes in attitudes toward the system of criminal justice, in feelings of personal accomplishment and ability, and sensitivity to others' viewpoints.

Teaching Strategies[11]

Palmer (1986) reviewed social studies research from 1930 to 1980 and determined that, despite many efforts to improve government curriculum and instruction, change was minimal. The government teacher, despite the availability of many alternative strategies, generally taught facts and provided descriptions of institutions.

King (1995) examined the concept of classroom thoughtfulness in twelve social studies classrooms at four secondary schools. This dissertation, guided by critical theory assumptions, determined that in most of the classes teaching for thinking and for citizenship was linked to transmission of knowledge for many teachers. In those classes where King suggests that civic content was more thoughtful, it was associated with socially progressive commitment by students. In these classes, students critiqued racially oppressive conditions and made connections among personally relevant issues with public ones.

Teacher Perceptions About LRE

Byerly (1980) developed an eleven question survey which was administered to 309 elementary teachers in twenty-two public elementary schools in Indiana. She found that most of the respondents had little knowledge of the LRE movement, had no training in LRE, and were not utilizing LRE resources. These teachers indicated that LRE should be a part of the curriculum at both the elementary and preservice teacher education levels. In addition, they indicated they wanted training in LRE.

Teacher Thinking and Beliefs

It is clear that teacher thinking, beliefs, and related decision-making have a significant impact on the LRE-related curriculum experienced by students. Teachers are the gatekeepers of the social studies and LRE curriculum, and as such, their personal theorizing significantly influences what students have the opportunity to learn (Thornton, 1991; Cornett, 1990; 1996). However, there is little research about teacher thinking about planning and instruction in the LRE related literature.

Hyland (1985) determined in a qualitative study of four eighth-grade social studies teachers who taught a unit about the Constitution, that the teachers relied heavily upon textbooks for instruction, developed low-level tasks for students, and tended to ignore student initiation of ideas for curriculum focus. In addition, he found a lack of congruence between the teacher beliefs that they stated were important and actual teaching practice.

Cornett (1987, 1990) conducted a qualitative investigation of an American government teacher at the grade twelve level. This teacher was considered to be an outstanding teacher by the students and administration. While the teacher in the study relied heavily on the textbook for transmission of key facts and concepts, she also utilized mock trials and resource speakers as significant parts of the course. Through observations, interviews, and analysis of curricular artifacts, the researcher identified five core personal practical theories which guided this teacher's decision-making: unconditional positive regard, empathic understanding, teacher as human, learning and teaching as fun, and organized and systematic presentation of material. The researcher found a clear congruence among the teacher's theories and her practice. However, a significant tension existed within the teacher's decision-making process between a need to cover material (systematic, unconditional positive regard) and a need to generate a responsive curriculum based upon student input and current events (learning and teaching as fun,

unconditional positive regard, empathy).

Cornett (1996) investigated the practice of four LRE teachers in four different regions of the State of Florida to determine their personal practical theories of teaching, their perceptions of the LRE curriculum, how their perceptions filter the curriculum, student perceptions about the teacher and LRE, and the relationship of each teacher's practice to recognized standards of practice. The researcher used observations, interviews, and curricular artifact analysis to determine that there was a significant congruence between each teacher's theory and practice. In addition, while the curriculum at the four sites varied considerably, students and other stakeholders were highly supportive of both the teachers and the LRE curriculum in each school. Finally, the researcher found each teacher's practice to be congruent with National Council for the Social Studies standards of powerful teaching and learning, and elements of thoughtfulness proposed by Fred Newmann and associates.

Administrators and LRE Programs

Wolff (1994) surveyed South Dakota school principals to determine their perceptions and attitudes towards law-related and civic education in their schools. The findings include: principals place more importance on these curricular areas at high school than at the elementary school level; less than 50% knew about national law and civic education associations and their materials.

Inservice of Teachers

Nosack (1976) investigated the impact of inservice training for teachers in ten schools in Utah on student changes in attitude, knowledge, and behavior. Pre and post measures of eleven sub-tests revealed no significant difference in those students whose teachers had inservice and those who did not.

Teen Courts and Service Learning[12]

Knepper (n.d.) evaluated teen court in several regions of Kentucky through tests of knowledge, surveys, observations, and group interviews of youths who volunteer for teen court as a form of community service. The evaluator findings include: 1) youths volunteer for three main reasons-- it is interesting, they are learning, and it serves the community; 2) participants learn about delinquency; 3) participants believe they learn about court officials' roles and court procedure; 4) attitudes (positive) toward authority figures increased in one site; and 5) teen court process is its greatest strength, lack of referrals its major weakness. He concludes that teen court provides a substantial LRE experience and meaningful service learning as well.

Institutionalization of LRE

Furey (1986) tested the relationship among organizational variables and LRE institutionalization in public schools. The variables, which are not described in the abstract, were described as having only moderate predictive power.

The Social Science Education Consortium (1989)investigated how LRE programs become institutionalized. The researchers utilized qualitative methods to develop eight case studies of eight school districts in four states. The researchers found that curriculum materials, outside resource persons, and events such as mock trials were important. They also found that a few local individuals were the driving factors behind LRE institutionalization. LRE content was more likely to be evident than the LRE instructional strategies, which translates to coverage of material as a primary objective.

Hardin (1991) edited the results of a survey of administrators, a pilot survey of teachers, and a final survey of teachers and of follow-up telephone interviews. The report indicates that LRE and citizenship education and its institutionalization varies considerably

from school to school, district to district, and state to state. The respondents indicated that LRE has positive impact on students, enhances class participation, promotes more interest about legal and ethical issues, better class attendance, and improved critical thinking skills. LRE curriculum is implemented in the following format: required courses 38%; integrated 33%, elective courses 29%.

Conclusion

Reviewers (e.g., Skeel,1991; Giese, 1997) have suggested that despite the fact that there are a limited number of research studies, the overall conclusion is that LRE programs have a positive effect on student knowledge, and in many cases on attitudes and behavior as well. In addition, the number of research studies is limited considering the pervasiveness of LRE and civic education in the school curriculum.

These findings are supported by the current review. It is quite clear that researchers consistently report that LRE curricula and instruction make a positive impact on traditional K-12 students compared to traditional approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers of LRE and administrators are also supportive of LRE elements of the curriculum. In addition, several researchers have reported the positive results of LRE on juvenile delinquency. The effects and levels of support vary from study to study, and there are methodological strengths and weaknesses in every study (as is the case in any research).

Recommendations

This review was significantly impacted by time constraints. Nevertheless, the research that was reviewed leads the author to the following recommendations:

1) Longitudinal studies. More encouragement and support for longitudinal studies, which utilize both quantitative and qualitative measures, should be provided to determine the long-range

impact of LRE on students as well as teachers;

2) Studies of Exemplary Practice. A greater emphasis should be placed on identifying outstanding LRE teachers and examining their impact on the curriculum and students. While it is informative to study all types of teachers, the research is generally clear that poor teachers lack subject matter knowledge and/or teaching skills that support LRE goals. These studies of outstanding programs across the country may then provide a more accurate picture of the complexity of LRE teaching and learning environments and models that may inform both preservice and inservice education;

3) Identification of Exemplary Research Examples. Research leaders should identify exemplary research studies (none will be perfect) that will serve as models for both beginning and experienced researchers. While careful critiques of existing studies should continue to be supported, more emphasis should be placed on the overall results of acceptable studies, and less on methodological flaws. This emphasis on the negative misleads both other researchers as well those outside the field about the importance of LRE and ultimately what research can "prove."

4) Improved Dissemination of Research. LRE organizations should work to continue to disseminate LRE research and to assist those who are completing doctoral dissertations and developing LRE research agendas in building upon existing research;

5) Promotion of Action Research. There are a number of LRE advocacy pieces in the ERIC data base that suggest a wide support for LRE in the field. Authors of these publications should be encouraged and assisted in conducting action research on their projects. In addition, outstanding LRE teachers should be joined in a network of action researchers who work collaboratively (either directly, or through e-mail or networking at conference and workshops). University and LRE association researchers can serve as collaborators and trainers in this process.

6) Preservice and Inservice Training Reports. State and national LRE trainers should report

data on the impact of their training efforts. Many teachers first learn about LRE as a field from state-level trainers or state or national workshops. In addition, the curriculum materials developed at both levels should be systematically researched.

7) University Teacher Education Initiatives. Most of the social studies teachers who teach civics, government, and law have at least one special methods course at the university level as either preservice or inservice educators. Social studies methods professors should be encouraged to contribute to the research base and report what attention they give to LRE in these courses, and the impact of these courses on teacher practice.

In conclusion, there should be a greater emphasis on informing the field about outstanding LRE teachers, curriculum, training efforts, and authentic assessment of student performance (e.g., mock trials, teen court, peer mediation, community service). Leming (1986) offers important advice about the focus of future research in the following:

> *What social studies research then is of most worth? In my judgment, a primary focus of social studies research should be on the study of exemplary programs as judged by the enthusiasm of students, teachers and community. Once such programs are identified, the focus of research should be to describe how the program works, why it is perceived as successful, and to the extent possible the effects of the curriculum on students (short and long term). Such research will blend qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry. It is my hunch that this focus of research will result in an increased appreciation of the importance of the charisma, intellect, energy and character of the individual teacher. In my judgment this dimension of the practice of social education has been overlooked. Generally, the public and the profession stand to gain little from further curricular effectiveness research. In all likelihood, the results of such studies are in the aggregate highly predictable, especially with regard to political attitudes. ... A focus on exemplary programs and rich descriptions of the infrastructure of those programs offer greater potential for understanding social education and communicating that understanding to practitioners, public, and policy makers.* (p. 150)

Endnotes

[1] The time allotted for this review was one month. This is a significant constraint. As a result, measures were taken to enhance the efficiency of the review. Analysis of previous reviews was conducted first, and sources were identified from these reviews for consideration in this report. Those items that were identified by computer with key words law related education were given highest priority and were carefully examined. Those items identified with key words civic education were given second priority. This is because this term is broader, and while it may encompass LRE practices, it also includes a much wider range of discourse. A future review might examine this aspect of the literature in more depth. Since *Theory and Research in Social Education* is the major research journal in social studies education, all issues in the past ten years of the journal were examined to check if scholars were conducting related research. In some instances the authors examined LRE elements but the authors and/or editors were not using LRE or civics as key words. This hand search review of *TRSE* was used since the reviewer's own article (Cornett, 1990) published in this journal had implications for LRE, but the keywords associated with it were teacher thinking, curriculum and instruction, and social studies education. A number of studies were identified as linked to the general emphasis of LRE, but were not included in the narrative because their primary focus was on another aspect of citizenship education. These include the following *TRSE* articles: Alter, 1995; Blankenship, 1990; Hahn, 1996; Hahn and Tocci, 1990; Pang, Gay, and Stanley, 1995; Wade, 1994. If time permits, a future reviewer might take this nuance into account and search for related literature in a more exhaustive manner. Most of the analysis of dissertation findings was dependent upon abstract information. While this is efficient, some abstracts are poorly written and/or do not use LRE keywords. In some cases the dissertation has much more significance than the abstract suggests. Perhaps this is due to the fact that abstracts are typically the last thing the doctoral student writes prior to graduation and it is not given proper attention. It would be helpful to have the entire documents to make more rigorous commentary on the scholarship. A future reviewer might contact state level LRE contacts to obtain local reports. While some state and regional level reports are included in this review, time and resource limitations did not permit full implementation of this strategy.

[2] However, the reviewer believes some of these characteristics have more significance than others. For example, it seems that the quality and quantity of instruction, active participation, and student interaction are more significant for LRE student outcomes and in teacher mediation of the curriculum than the element of outside resource persons (see the Social Science Education Consortium's (1989) case studies which describe this variability and factors associated with outside resource utilization (pp. 163-164). Other case study research should build on this research and examine the power of these constructs. For example, Cornett's (1996) qualitative study of four exemplary teachers shows variance in each of these dimensions, but does not use these characteristics as organizers for the study.

[3] It should be noted that Patrick and Hoge do not list any dissertations in there references, however, they do reference major journals (e.g., *TRSE*) and reports (e.g., Johnson, 1984; Shaver, 1984).

[4] In addition, the author would like to remind readers that all research studies have limitations which should be addressed by researchers in their research reports. For example, studies are necessarily limited by time, researcher expertise, resources, and contextual constraints of the research site and participants. This author asked Professor Shaver during his presentation on quantitative research at the National Law-Related Education Invitational Research Seminar in Nashville, Tennessee, September, 1991, to identify any studies in LRE, social studies education, or education in general that were not flawed. He asked Shaver to provide a model of an exemplary quantitative research study, and none was provided. This is not to suggest that there are not serious flaws in studies that need to be

addressed, rather, it is to remind the reader that it is difficult to conduct research on the effects of LRE because of the complexity of contexts, researcher limitations, and human, temporal, and resource constraints. It is also to suggest that educators may spend too much time looking for the "perfect study" while ignoring the overall impact of the literature (see also Leming, 1986).

[5] This points to a problem in all literature reviews. This author is interpreting what the evidence suggests in the writings of these authors. A more thoughtful approach would be to interview each of the scholars to triangulate the interpretation. Of course this would require additional time and resources.

[6] It should be noted that this total differs from Skeel's during the time period she reviewed 1977-1991. She reported 9 dissertations, while the current computer-based review yielded 14 dissertations. This may have occurred because of the absence of current technology to assist in the search process. In addition, three of the sources cited by Skeel in her review (Hersch, 1977; Fielding, 1980; and Tinkler, 1981) were not found in the current search utilizing the computer assisted search process. This is no doubt because the key word law related education was not linked to these studies when the authors submitted their dissertation abstracts to the data base. This problem suggests a need for multiple sources of information on potential scholarship for those conducting reviews of the literature. The reviews by Skeel (1991) and Giese (1997) were especially helpful for this reviewer as a means of identifying sources as well as a check on the interpretations of those sources by this reviewer.

[7] The following dissertations were identified as relevant to law related education by the computer assisted search. However, they were excluded from the narrative of this review because they were non-empirical. Berman's study (1993) is a synthesis of research about social responsibility. Case (1992) presents his justification of why judicial reasoning should be included in LRE and defines the construct. While these studies may have information of value to the field, they did not use quantitative or qualitative methods to determine some aspect of the impact of LRE on the stakeholders in an identified context. In addition, Wietig's (1979) dissertation was not included because the abstract obtained was not readable and sufficient time was not available in the review period to obtain a clear copy. Lewis-Ruggiero (1987) was an empirical study which compared the reactions to corrective justice cases of fifteen U. S. born non-minority males aged 12-15 with fifteen Muslin males born in the Middle East and living in the United States no more than 3.5 years. The study was not included because the focus was on cross cultural differences.

[8] Most of the civic education titles which were generated were not relevant for this review (for example, titles such as "The democratic citizen and the expanded self: Self-development and representative government in the works of Wilhelm Von Humbold, G. W. F. Hegel and John Stuart Mill"; "The takeover of the National People's Army by the Bundeswehr"; "Teaching the cold war using a comparative approach").

[9] See Avery, 1988, for a thoughtful discussion of this construct.

[10] This heading was used by Skeel (1991) in her review.

[11] This heading was used by Skeel (1991) in her review.

[12] The study by Markus, Howard, and King (1993) which examined community service and its value in an undergraduate political science course was not included in this review because of its lack of direct link to K-12 education. However, the study reports significant effects on students' orientations, classroom learnings, and grades. The items used for ratings may prove useful to other researchers who study community service in K-12 settings. The dissertation conducted by Cagenellos (1994) was not included because it was college level. He studied developmental change in those who took part in a

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